

REMARKS

In the foregoing amendments, claims 76, 92, and 95-98 are canceled without prejudice, disclaimer, or waiver; and claims 66, 77-83, and 87 are amended. Claims 50-75, 77-91, 93, and 94 are now pending in the present application.

I. Allowable Claims

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for indicating the existence of allowable claims in the present application. Particularly, the Examiner indicated that claims 50-65 are allowable and that claims 76-86 and 92-94 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Regarding claims 76-83, Applicant has canceled claim 76 and incorporated the subject matter of this claim into independent claim 66, which has substantially the same effect as Examiner's suggestion for allowability. Therefore, it is believed that claim 66, and all claims dependent therefrom, are allowable.

Regarding claims 84-86, Applicant has rewritten claim 84 in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, it is believed that claim 84 is allowable. It is also believed that claims 85 and 86 are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable claim 84.

Regarding allowable claims 92-94, Applicant has canceled claim 92 and incorporated the subject matter of this claim into independent claim 87. This has substantially the same effect as Examiner's suggestion for allowability. Therefore, it is believed that claim 87, and all claims dependent therefrom, are allowable.

II. Response to 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

Claims 66-69, 71-75, and 87-91 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by *Tanaka* (U.S. Patent No. 6,431,318). In addition, claims 95, 96, and 98 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by *Shimizu* (U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0108506).

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. However, in order to advance prosecution in the present application, claims 95-98 have been canceled. Also, the subject matter of allowable claim 76 has been incorporated into independent claim 66

and the subject matter of allowable claim 92 has been incorporated into independent claim 87. Thus, these claim amendments render the rejections moot. Applicant reserves the right to pursue previous versions of the claims and canceled claims in continuation applications, if so desired.

III. Response to 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

Claims 70 and 97 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over *Shimizu* ('506) in view of *Shimizu* (JP 10201599). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. However, in order to advance prosecution, the claim have been amended, as mentioned above, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the now pending claims 50-75, 77-91, 93, and 94 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary T. Kilgore
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